United States
Department of
Agriculture

Office of
Information

Selected Speeches and News Releases

December 28 - January 4, 1990

IN THIS ISSUE:

News Releases—

Continued on inside front cover.

News Releases Continued.

USDA Announces 1990 Rice Program Provisions

Hearing Set on Proposed Amendments to Federal Cranberry Marketing Order

Private Exporters Report Sales Activity for USSR, Unknown, China, and Pakistan

This Week's Honey-Loan Repayment Levels Unchanged

"Good Guy" Bacteria May Come to the Rescue in Salmonella War

News Releases

U.S. Department of Agriculture • Office of Information

USDA ANNOUNCES CHANGES IN DAIRY PRICE SUPPORT PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, Dec. 29—Acting Secretary of Agriculture Roland R. Vautour said today that the level of price support for milk will be reduced from $10.60 to $10.10 per hundredweight (cwt.), effective Jan. 1, 1990.

Vautour said the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1989 provides that the secretary may reduce the milk support price by not more than 50 cents per cwt. if purchases of surplus milk and dairy products during calendar 1990 are estimated to exceed 5 billion pounds, milk equivalent.

At the current $10.60 support price, the projected surplus purchases are estimated at 8 billion pounds, milk equivalent-milkfat basis. With the support level at $10.10, purchases in 1990 are estimated at 7.4 billion pounds milk equivalent-milkfat basis. On a total milk solids basis, the estimated 1990 surplus ranges from 3.6 to 4.4 billion pounds, milk equivalent-total milk solids basis.

All recent price support adjustments, including the adjustment taking effect Jan. 1, have been made based upon surplus determinations using a milkfat basis.

The price support of $10.10 per cwt. is for milk with a milkfat content of 3.67 percent—the national average—and compares with $9.88 per cwt. for milk with a milkfat content of 3.5 percent.

The price support program for milk is carried out through CCC purchases of butter, cheese and nonfat dry milk.

The act provides further that the secretary must offer to purchase butter for not more than $1.10 per pound, except that the secretary may allocate the rate of price support between the purchase prices for non-fat dry milk and butter in such other manner as he determines will result in the lowest level of expenditures by CCC.

To better reflect current market conditions, all of the decrease in the support price for milk used in manufacturing butter and nonfat dry milk will be allocated to the CCC purchase price of butter. The CCC purchase price for butter will be reduced by 11.25 cents per pound to $1.0925 per pound. The nonfat dry milk price will remain unchanged. The CCC

purchase price for block Cheddar and barrel cheese will be reduced by 4.5 cents per pound to $1.11 and $1.07 per pound, respectively, to correspond with the new support price level. These actions will assure an adequate supply of milk.

Further terms and conditions for CCC purchases of dairy products will be contained in CCC announcements.

CCC-owned dairy products, when available, can be purchased for unrestricted use at prices which are about 10 percent over the prevailing CCC price support purchase prices. Currently, only butter is being offered for sale.

Phil Villa-Lobos (202) 447-4026

#

USDA'S BIOTECHNOLOGY ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO DISCUSS RESEARCH ISSUES

WASHINGTON, Dec. 29—The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Biotechnology Research Advisory Committee (ABRAC) will meet Jan. 10-12 to discuss guidelines for researchers considering field testing, biotechnology research needs and priorities, and the status of USDA's biotechnology activities.

The meeting will be in room 104-A of USDA's Administration Building, the Mall, Washington, D.C., from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Jan. 10-11, and from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Jan 12. It is open to the public; individuals may participate as time and space permit.

Dr. Alvin Young, director of the USDA's Office of Agricultural Biotechnology and ABRAC's executive secretary, said, "This meeting will provide an opportunity for the committee, invited speakers, and the public to comment on issues involving the department's biotechnology activities. Highlights of the meeting's agenda include:

11 a.m. Jan. 10—Public comment on the White House's Biotechnology Science Coordinating Committee's documents on the scope of organisms covered in guidelines and regulations.

2 p.m. Jan. 11—Professor Thomas Hoban, North Carolina State University, will speak on a recent survey involving public perceptions of biotechnology.

10:30 a.m. Jan. 12—A demonstration of USDA's use of artificial intelligence to facilitate compliance with guidelines and regulations.

Featured Speakers include representatives from the National Science Foundation; the National Research Council; the Agency for International Development; the U.S. Army; and USDA's Agricultural Research Service, Forest Service, and Food Safety and Inspection Service.

For more information, or to file written comments before or after the meeting, contact Dr. Alvin Young, executive secretary, Agricultural Biotechnology Research Advisory Committee, Office of Agricultural Biotechnology, USDA, Room 321-A, Washington, D.C. 20250; telephone (202) 447-9165.

Marti Asner (202) 447-9165

#

CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM TO REDUCE EROSION ON U.S. CROPLAND BY 20 PERCENT

WASHINGTON, Dec. 29—The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Conservation Reserve Program will reduce soil erosion on the nation's cropland by about one-fifth when the conservation practices are installed, according to Wilson Scaling, chief of USDA's Soil Conservation Service.

"We already can see the benefits of the program—in less sedimentation, increased habitat for wildlife, and improved water quality," said Scaling.

The five states with the most erosion reduction projected per year are Texas, Colorado, Kansas, North Dakota, and Iowa.

Nationwide, the average soil loss on land in the program is estimated to be reduced from 20.9 to 1.6 tons per acre after permanent vegetation is established.

The goal of the Conservation Reserve Program is to retire 40-45 million acres of highly erodible cropland from production. Farmers submitted bids to USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service to put their land into the program. They receive an annual rental payment for putting the land into protective cover, such as grass or trees, for 10 years.

The ninth signup, which ended in August, resulted in nearly 3.3 million more acres in the program. Nationwide the average rental rate is $49 an acre for all acreage enrolled since the program began.

Total contracts, acreage, and erosion reduction figures by state through the ninth signup follow.

State	Number of Contracts	Acres Contracted	Net Erosion Reduction (tons/year)
Alabama	9,043	519,530	9,262,162
Alaska	42	25,375	118,128
Arkansas	2,937	225,353	3,214,291
California	493	183,054	2,496,189
Colorado	6,083	1,953,042	48,373,834
Connecticut	1	10	120
Delaware	29	984	7,805
Florida	2,228	123,013	1,879,683
Georgia	13,794	663,156	8,336,660
Hawaii	1	85	340
Idaho	3,437	791,061	12,555,336
Illinois	14,910	633,580	12,762,181
Indiana	9,122	364,729	5,922,233
Iowa	30,666	1,970,158	36,258,631
Kansas	29,827	2,861,786	46,499,899
Kentucky	7,397	416,799	14,323,459
Louisiana	1,571	132,907	1,597,500
Maine	911	37,222	262,049
Maryland	550	16,059	158,029
Massachusetts	5	32	222
Michagan	4,930	196,305	2,400,211
Minnesota	25,400	1,830,672	30,901,480
Mississippi	11,830	726,898	15,574,917
Missouri	19,557	1,504,413	28,402,419
Montana	7,503	2,720,133	35,553,840
Nebraska	13,323	1,348,929	30,234,603
Nevada	10	3,124	49,130
New Jersey	28	661	10,673
New Mexico	1,511	480,765	19,937,486
New York	1,500	54,606	703,283
North Carolina	5,891	137,040	2,283,534

North Dakota	18,172	3,137,199	45,241,802
Ohio	5,870	254,130	3,085,198
Oklahoma	8,332	1,155,450	26,495,577
Oregon	1,943	517,150	5,746,346
Pennsylvania	2,417	92,465	1,559,277
Puerto Rico	7	440	14,816
South Carolina	6,354	265,513	3,438,000
South Dakota	12,116	2,084,557	21,682,770
Tennessee	9,809	429,352	9,854,256
Texas	18,268	3,921,378	138,072,958
Utah	982	232,318	3,810,420
Vermont	9	187	2,371
Virginia	2,914	73,939	1,307,799
Washington	3,996	975,320	13,331,200
West Virginia	34	610	6,000
Wisconsin	16,849	604,060	8,556,204
Wyoming	793	257,022	3,357,660
U.S. Total	333,395	33,922,565	655,642,980

Note: Arizona, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island have no CRP contracts.

Diana Morse (202) 447-7547

#

PLANTING OPTIONS FOR PRODUCERS IN 1990 COMMODITY PROGRAMS

WASHINGTON, Dec. 29—A U.S. Department of Agriculture official said today that producers who participate in production control or use the 0/92 and 50/92 provisions of the 1990 commodity price support and production adjustment programs may plant certain approved nonprogram crops on land designated as conserving use (CU) acreage.

The approved crops may not be grown on land designated as acreage conservation reserve.

Dan Shaw, acting executive vice president of USDA'S Commodity Credit Corp., said the selected crops are: sunflower, flax, rapeseed, including canola, safflower, castor beans, mustard seed, crambe, triticale,

quinoa, Jerusalem artichoke, kenaf, milkweed, amaranth and psyllium.

Shaw said that as a condition for the option to plant these crops on CU or 0-50/92 acreage, the producer must agree to forgo any deficiency payments that would otherwise be paid on such acreage.

This requirement is imposed to prevent any possible adverse impact on traditional producers of these commodities, he said. Other crops were not approved to avoid adverse impact on the price of those crops.

"Producers cannot use their oats base for approved nonprogram crop production. Oats are in short supply and allowing oats base to be used for this purpose would only worsen that situation," said Shaw.

CCC announced on Aug. 7 that production of approved nonprogram crops on CU land would not be permitted. Due to considerable interest, CCC asked on Nov. 20 for public comment on these plantings.

"Comments from producers and further evaluation indicate significant benefits may come from authorizing the production of selected approved nonprogram crops on CU acreage," Shaw said.

Shaw cited these additional reasons for allowing planting options:

—Production of selected approved nonprogram crops in short supply will rise;

—the competitiveness of selected approved nonprogram crops will increase in domestic and foreign markets; and

—budget savings.

Producers may obtain further information from county Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service offices.

Bruce Merkle (202) 447-8206

#

CALIFORNIA ORANGE HANDLERS AND PRINCIPALS CHARGED

WASHINGTON, Dec. 29—The U.S. Departments of Agriculture and Justice have filed charges against two California orange handlers and two individuals for violating the federal marketing order for California-Arizona navel oranges. The charges, filed Dec. 12 in the U.S. District Court, Fresno, Calif., seek $145,469 in penalties.

Daniel D. Haley, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, and David F. Levi, U.S. attorney for the eastern district of California, said Sequoia Orange Co. Inc., Exeter, Calif., exceeded its

marketing order shipping allotment for navel oranges by 17,645 cartons during the weekly allotment periods ending Nov. 9, Nov. 16, and Dec. 7.

The $145,469 penalty is the alleged market price of the overshipped oranges, Haley said. Such a penalty is authorized by the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937, under which the marketing order functions, Haley said.

The complaint seeks to extend liability to Marvin L. Wilson, Carl A. Pescosolido Jr., and Sequoia Enterprises Inc., all of Exeter, who, the complaint alleges, knowingly participated with and aided Sequoia Orange Co. in the overshipments.

The government also seeks injunctions to prevent the defendants from exceeding shipping allotments in the future.

"An action to enforce the marketing order in federal court in this instance is fully merited," Haley said. "Not only did Sequoia Orange Co. fail to comply with allotment regulations, but it also encouraged other handlers to overship their allotments," he said.

Clarence Steinberg (202) 447-6179

#

0-25 PROGRAM SIGNUP DATES ANNOUNCED

WASHINGTON, Dec. 29—An official of the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced today that signup in the new 0-25 program for soybeans will be Jan. 16 through Feb. 16 for 1990 crops. Since sunflowers and safflowers may also be planted on conservation use acres as approved nonprogram crops, signup for those crops is not required.

Dan Shaw, acting vice president of USDA's Commodity Credit Corp., said section 504 of the Agricultural Act of 1949, as amended, provides authority to offer a 0-25 program to producers for planting soybeans, sunflowers and safflowers on 1990 program crop base acreage and allows producers to have this acreage considered as being planted to the program crop for crop history purposes.

Producers may sign up to plant soybeans on no more than 25 percent of their permitted acreages for 1990 wheat, feed grains, upland cotton, extra long staple cotton and rice. Producers participating in this option will not lose or gain farm acreage base or individual crop acreage bases on their farms as a result of 0-25 plantings.

Following the signup period, USDA will estimate whether, based on the anticipated additional 0-25 soybean plantings, the average market price for the 1990 crop of soybeans will be less than $4.98 per bushel (110 percent of the 1989 loan rate for soybeans of $4.53 per bushel). If the soybean price is expected to be below this level, CCC will reduce or eliminate all or a portion of the permitted acreage that may be planted to soybeans under this program.

Program benefits other than soybean price support loans and purchases will not be available to producers who participate in the 0-25 program.

Producers may obtain further information from county Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service offices.

Bruce Merkle (202) 447-8206

#

MEAT IMPORTS NOT EXPECTED TO TRIGGER RESTRAINTS IN 1990

WASHINGTON, Dec. 29—Acing Under Secretary of Agriculture Ann Veneman today announced that the first-quarter estimate of U.S. meat imports for calendar 1990 is below the level that would require quotas or restraints on imports under the Meat Import Act of 1979.

Veneman said that, based on U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates of available supplies and marketing plans by major meat exporters, imports of beef and other meats subject to the act during 1990 should total 1,150 million pounds—about 216 million below the 1990 trigger level, which was set at 1,366.2 million pounds. As a result, import restrictions are not required for 1990 by this estimate.

Meat imports through November 1989 were about 20 percent below the same period in 1988 (excluding Canada), due mainly to a 252-million-pound (33 percent) reduction in imports from Australia this year, according to Veneman. Australian exporters expanded their shipments to Pacific Rim countries, especially Japan, she said. In 1990, imports from Australia are expected to rise due to an increase in meat production there, Veneman said, while those from New Zealand are expected to decline as a result of reduced production.

The Meat Import Act of 1979 requires the president to consider restrictions on imports of certain meat items—primarily beef and veal—if

a USDA quarterly estimate of meat imports equals or exceeds the trigger level determined by formula in the act.

Imports of Meat Subject to the Meat Import Act

	1986	1987	1988	1989[1]
		- - -*million pounds*- - -		
January	77.7	44.4	135.6	74.5
February	102.2	138.2	112.3	80.3
March	83.2	84.9	144.8	88.5
April	70.8	146.0	146.6	97.1
May	72.1	103.4	134.7	104.0
June	148.4	135.4	142.7	103.4
July	122.1	181.5	124.4	114.6
August	144.0	137.4	123.0	111.0
September	167.4	158.0	140.4	90.2
October	119.8	153.8	118.7	83.6
November	102.4	86.6	114.2	83.1
December	129.2	90.1	84.9	
TOTAL[2]	1,339.3	1,459.7	1,521.3	

[1]Imports from Canada are excluded as a result of the signing of the U.S.-Canada Free Trade Implementation Act of 1988.
[2]Totals may not add due to rounding.

Don Washington (202) 447-3448

#

ST. LOUIS FIRM AND OFFICIALS FINED FOR MEAT INSPECTION VIOLATIONS

WASHINGTON, Dec. 29—West Meat Co., Inc., a meat processing operation in Rock Hill, Mo., today was ordered to pay $95,000 in restitution to the state for selling more than 325,000 pounds of adulterated meat to about two dozen hospitals, schools and prisons in

Missouri, a U.S. Department of Agriculture food safety official said. Company president Joseph West and plant manager Jeffrey West were each ordered to pay an additional $95,000 in restitution. They were also sentenced to 24 months and 21 months in prison respectively, to be followed by 1 year of probation.

In August 1989, the company and its officials each entered a guilty plea to one felony count on the charges.

"I am pleased with the sentence handed down today by the U.S. District Court of St. Louis, Mo.," said Dr. Lester M. Crawford, administrator of USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service. "The court has moved expeditiously to punish those who would undermine the integrity of the food supply and compromise the safety of the American public."

The convictions resulted from a cooperative investigation conducted by FSIS, USDA's Office of Inspector General and the state of Missouri, Crawford said.

FSIS began an investigation of West Meat Co.'s processing operation in October 1988, following information that the firm was violating meat inspection laws. FSIS laboratory testing confirmed the presence of adulterants in the company's products and immediately increased inspection coverage of the firm. FSIS also turned over its test results to OIG for further investigation and for use in the possible filing of criminal charges against the firm.

Investigative evidence showed that between October 1987 and October 1988 the company and its officials added a variety of substances to approximately 334,000 pounds of ground beef, pork sausage, and polish sausage with an intent to defraud, Crawford said.

Federal regulations allow only skeletal meat to be used in ground beef and pork sausage. Kidneys and other by-products are not permitted.

Fraudulent practices disclosed during the OIG investigation included:

—Adding inedible beef lungs and beef suet (fat) to pork sausage.

—Using chicken hearts, livers, gizzards and ground chicken necks as ingredients in sausage products labeled as "all meat."

—Adding inedible meat and poultry labeled as "pet food" to meat products.

—Chemically treating off-condition and out-of-date hams and then resmoking the products and selling or adding them to sausage. In addition, ham curing brine was used in fresh pork sausage to mask adulterated poultry ingredients.

—Using the plant intercom system to warn employees when FSIS inspectors were coming so substances not allowed in ground beef or pork sausage could be hidden.

Evidence from the OIG investigation was turned over to the U.S. attorney in St. Louis on March 2.

The state of Missouri has also filed a lawsuit against the West Meat Co., and is seeking $800,000 in damages. The company closed voluntarily on May 8.

The Food Safety and Inspection Service conducts an inspection program to assure safe, wholesome and accurately labeled meat and poultry.

Jim Greene (202) 382-0314

#

PRIVATE EXPORTERS REPORT SALES ACTIVITY FOR LIBERIA

WASHINGTON, Dec. 29—Private exporters today reported to the U.S. Department of Agriculture export sales of 169,750 metric tons of hard red spring wheat for delivery to Liberia. Of the total, 54,000 tons is for delivery during the 1989-90 marketing year and 115,750 is for delivery during the 1990-91 marketing year.

The marketing year for wheat begins June 1.

USDA issues both daily and weekly export sales reports to the public. Exporters are required to report to USDA export sales of 100,000 metric tons or more of one commodity, made in one day, to one destination by 3:00 PM eastern time on the next business day following the sale. Export sales of less than these quantities must be reported to USDA on a weekly basis.

Thomas B. McDonald (202) 447-3273

#

CCC INTEREST RATE FOR JANUARY LOWERED TO 7-3/4 PERCENT

WASHINGTON, Jan. 2—Commodity loans disbursed in January by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Commodity Credit Corporation will

carry a 7-3/4 percent interest rate, according to Keith Bjerke, executive vice president of the CCC.

The 7-3/4 percent interest rate is down from December's 7-7/8 percent and reflects the interest rate charged CCC by the U.S. Treasury in January.

Any outstanding 1981 and subsequent crop commodity loans and any outstanding facility loans approved and disbursed on or after April 1, 1981 and before January 1, 1990, will accrue interest at a rate of 7-3/4 percent per year during 1990. This interest rate is subject to adjustment each Jan. 1.

Bruce Merkle (202) 447-8206

#

USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET RICE PRICES

WASHINGTON, Jan. 2—Under Secretary of Agriculture Richard T. Crowder today announced the prevailing world market prices of milled rice, loan rate basis, as follows:

—long grain whole kernels, 9.76 cents per pound;
—medium grain whole kernels, 9.06 cents per pound;
—short grain whole kernels, 8.94 cents per pound;
—broken kernels, 4.88 cents per pound.

Based upon these prevailing world market prices for milled rice, rough rice world prices are estimated to be:

—long grain, $6.03 per hundredweight;
—medium grain, $5.64 per hundredweight;
—short grain, $5.43 per hundredweight.

The prices announced are effective today at 3 p.m. EST. The next scheduled price announcement will be made Jan. 9, 1990 at 3 p.m. EST, although prices may be announced sooner if warranted.

Gene Rosera (202) 447-7923

#

RICE PLANTS PLAY ROUGH WITH WEEDS

WASHINGTON, Jan. 3—News from the front in the war on weeds should lift the spirits of farmers and environmentalists alike—A U.S. Department of Agriculture geneticist has found literally hundreds of rice varieties that repel weeds without man-made help.

"We typically spray herbicides to try to control weeds," said Robert H. Dilday of USDA's Agricultural Research Service. "Utilizing this natural defense could lead to a savings in herbicides, and reduce the amount of chemicals a farmer uses."

Dilday has identified 191 rice varieties with some ability to naturally repel ducksalad, 132 varieties that fend off redstem, and 15 with resistance to both ducksalad and redstem. Redstem and ducksalad are aquatic weeds that clog rice fields. Dilday also has found six rice varieties with resistance to broadleaf signalgrass, a weed that competes strongly with the rice crop for nutrients and sunlight.

In field tests in 1988, the weeds on average would not grow within five inches of the resistant rice plants. "One variety had a weed-free radius of eight to nine inches, and another had a radius of seven to eight inches," said Dilday. He works at ARS' Rice Production and Weed Control Research Laboratory at Stuttgart, Ark.

The natural ability of a plant to repel other plants is called "allelopathy." Lawrence Christy, ARS National Program Leader for Weed Science, said the agency's researchers hope to pinpoint the source of plants' allelopathic capabilities—perhaps a gene that produces a chemical toxic to certain other plants—and transfer it into all kinds of crop plants.

Allelopathy is nothing new; the ancient writings of Pliny the Elder mention suspicions that plants work against one another. But modern scientific techniques could help farmers benefit from that ability.

"A study of allelopathic chemicals can give us insights into the biochemistry of different species of plants, to help develop chemicals geared to more specific weed problems," said Roger D. Hagin, an ARS weed scientist at the agency's Plant Protection Research Unit at Ithaca, N.Y. "We might find a unique biochemical pathway that we could interfere with in the weed."

Among the numerous ARS efforts at probing the mysteries of allelopathy are the following projects:

*Research chemist Richard G. Powell and co-workers at the Bioactive Constituents Research Laboratory at Peoria, Ill., are searching for answers to the chemical basis for alfalfa's decline in performance when it is grown continuously.

*Soil scientist Leo N. Namken and fellow researchers at the Conservation and Production Systems Research Laboratory at Weslaco, Texas, are taking a close look at the effect of plant residues on specific crops in no-till farming systems. They hope to develop cropping systems that avoid the detrimental effects of allelopathic chemicals that may lie in the wait in the soil to take their toll in subsequent crops.

*At the Herbicide Interactions in Plants and Soils Laboratory at Stoneville, Miss., laboratory director Stephen O. Duke and plant physiologist Kevin C. Vaughn are studying the effects of allelopathic chemicals on various crop and weed species. Their goal is to pinpoint the mechanisms by which plants succumb to or resist allelopathic chemicals.

At the U.S. Vegetable Research Laboratory at Charleston, S.C., research agronomist Howard F. Harrison Jr. is investigating the allelopathic interactions between vegetables and weeds. Harrison also is studying the allelopathic effects of sweet potato plants on weeds to determine the potential for developing highly competitive sweet potato cultivars.

Sandy Miller Hays (301) 344-4089

#

WISCONSIN STATE REPRESENTATIVE NAMED FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE ADMINISTRATOR

WASHINGTON, Jan. 3—State Representative Betty Jo Nelsen, a 10-year veteran of the Wisconsin Assembly, today was named administrator of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service.

In announcing the appointment, Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter said, "Betty Jo Nelsen brings a wide range of legislative and public service experience to this vital post and will be a valuable asset to the USDA team. Active in welfare reform efforts in Wisconsin, she has demonstrated longstanding interest in the health and welfare of those who are served by FNS programs."

FNS, which reports to Assistant Secretary for Food and Consumer Services Catherine A. Bertini, administers federal food assistance programs, including the food stamp, food distribution, supplemental food for women, infants and children, school lunch, school breakfast, special milk, child care, summer feeding, and other child nutrition and family food assistance programs.

The new FNS administrator, who will report Jan. 16, was elected to the Wisconsin Assembly in a special election in 1979, and has been reelected biennially since then. As a member of the Joint Finance Committee—one of 20 on which she has served—she was one of 16 legislators responsible for developing the state's $11 billion annual budget. She was minority leader of the assembly from 1987-88, and served on the Welfare Reform Commission, also in 1987-88.

Prior to holding elective office, Nelsen coordinated the Milwaukee Voluntary Action Center Involvement Corps where she was responsible for all aspects of a pilot program linking corporate sector volunteers with nonprofit agencies seeking voluntary help. She also has served as president of the Junior League of Milwaukee; chaired the Agency Evaluation Committee for the United Way of Greater Milwaukee; and was program manager of volunteers with the Milwaukee County Department of Public Welfare.

A graduate of Dedham (Mass.) High School, she earned a bachelor's degree in education with a major in food and nutrition from Massachusetts State College, Framingham, in 1957. Immediately after graduation from college, she taught junior high school in Omaha, Neb.

She and her husband are the parents of three grown children, and live in Shorewood, Wis.

Kelly Shipp (202) 447-4623

#

USDA ANNOUNCES REGULATIONS FOR DAIRY COLLECTION PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, Jan. 3—The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced a reduction of 6.3 cents per hundredweight in the price to be received by producers for all milk produced within the continental United States, excluding Alaska, and marketed for commercial use Jan. 1-31.

Keith Bjerke, executive vice president of USDA's Commodity Credit

Corporation, said that the reduction applies to January marketings only. It is being implemented under the provisions of the Agricultural Act of 1949 in lieu of reductions in outlays under the price support program that would otherwise be required for the full fiscal year under the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

Generally, the reduction must be made and collected by persons paying producers or obligated to pay producers for milk and be remitted to the CCC by Feb. 28. Producers are required to remit the funds directly to CCC if they market milk to consumers directly through wholesale or retail outlets or if they market milk that is subject to the reduction outside the area of the 48 contiguous states and the District of Columbia.

The reduction has been implemented by adopting, except for changes to the time period and amount of the reduction, the same procedures and regulations that applied to the price reduction program for milk marketed in 1988.

The program will be administered for the CCC by USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service.

Robert Feist (202) 447-6789

#

GRAIN INSPECTION ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO MEET

WASHINGTON, Jan. 3—The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Federal Grain Inspection Service Advisory Committee will hold its second quarterly meeting of fiscal 1990 at 8:30 a.m. Thursday, Jan. 18, in the Clarion Hotel, 1500 Canal Street, New Orleans, La.

The agenda includes discussion of the role of the advisory committee, pending legislation, improving grain standards, aflatoxin testing, finances, and sunflower seed oil calibration.

The committee is composed of 15 members appointed by the secretary of agriculture to represent all segments of the grain industry in advising the administrator of USDA's Federal Grain Inspection Service on implementation of the U.S. Grain Standards Act.

The meeting will be open to the public. Persons who wish to address the committee or submit written statements before or after the meeting should contact Les Malone, Assistant to the Administrator, FGIS, U.S.

Department of Agriculture, P.O. Box 96454, Washington, D.C. 20090-6454; telephone (202) 382-0216.

Allen A. Atwood (202) 475-3367

#

MEETING OF PACA INDUSTRY ADVISORY COMMITTEE SET FOR JAN. 18

WASHINGTON, Jan. 3—The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act (PACA) Industry Advisory Committee will hold its fourth meeting from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Jan. 18 at the Hyatt Regency Phoenix, 122 N. Second St., Phoenix, Ariz. The meeting is open to the public.

PACA promotes fair marketing practices for fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables in interstate or foreign commerce. The committee includes representatives of fruit and vegetable growers, shippers, brokers, processors, wholesalers and retailers.

"At the meeting, the committee will continue its consideration of matters relating to the PACA and its administration," said Daniel D. Haley, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service.

Any recommendations by the committee will be submitted to Congress and to the secretary of agriculture for their consideration, Haley said. The committee's final report will be submitted to the secretary, the House Committee on Agriculture and the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry by May 1.

The committee is chaired by Charles R. Brader, director of AMS' fruit and vegetable division.

Notice of the meeting will be published in the Jan. 4 Federal Register. For additional information, contact the committee's executive secretary, John D. Flanagan, chief, PACA Branch, Rm. 2095-S, USDA, AMS, Fruit and Vegetable Division, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456; telephone (202) 447-2272.

Carolyn Coutts (202) 447-8998

#

USDA ANNOUNCES 1990 RICE PROGRAM PROVISIONS

WASHINGTON, Jan. 3—Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter today announced a required acreage reduction (ARP) of 22.5 percent for the 1990 rice program. This compares with a 25-percent ARP for the 1989 program.

Yeutter also announced these additional 1990 rice program provisions:

—A national average price support level of $6.50 per hundredweight.

—An established "target" price of $10.71 per hundredweight.

—The differential between whole kernel milled rice price support rates of different classes is established at $1.00 per hundredweight, the same as the 1989 crop. Whole kernel milled rice price support rates are $10.84 per hundredweight for long grain and $9.84 for medium and short grain rice. The broken kernel rate for all rice classes is $5.42 per hundredweight.

—Producers who pledged 1990 crop rice as collateral for a price support loan will not be permitted to purchase marketing certificates when repaying loans at the marketing loan repayment rate.

—Loan deficiency payments will be made available under the same terms and conditions that were applicable to the 1989 crop.

—The discretionary inventory reduction program will not be implemented.

—The program signup period is Jan. 16 through April 13.

Other program provisions which are common to the 1990 crops of wheat, feed grains, cotton and rice were announced on Aug. 7.

Robert Feist (202) 447-6789

#

HEARING SET ON PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO FEDERAL CRANBERRY MARKETING ORDER

WASHINGTON, Jan. 3—The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced public hearings on proposals to amend the federal marketing agreement and order for cranberries in order for the industry to keep abreast of changes in production and marketing technology.

Hearings will pertain to cranberries grown in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Jersey, Wisconsin, Michigan, Minnesota, Oregon, Washington, and the Long Island area of New York.

Hearing sessions will be held Jan. 17, at the Sheraton Plymouth Hotel, 180 Water Street, Plymouth, Mass.; Feb. 6, at the Sheraton Post Inn, Routes 70 and 290, Cherry Hill, N.J.; Feb. 13, at the Mead Inn, 451 East Grand Ave., Wisconsin Rapids, Wisc.; and Feb. 15, at the Green/Wyatt Federal Building, Rm. 333, 1220 S.W. Third Ave., Portland, Ore. All meetings will begin at 9 a.m.

Proposed by the marketing order's administrative committee, the amendments would:

—authorize the committee to conduct production research and development projects;

—calculate annual allotments on the basis of growers' sales histories;

—add tenure provisions for committee members;

—establish provisions regarding disposition of excess cranberries;

—require handlers to pay assessments on the weight of cranberries they receive from growers rather than on the weight handlers actually sell; and,

—make minor procedural changes to streamline administration of the order.

Daniel D. Haley, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said the proponents claim the amendments would benefit growers and consumers. Of special interest to consumers, he said, could be the outcome of research that, for example, produced a disease-resistant, high-yielding variety minimizing the need for chemical pesticide controls in the future.

''For cranberries to continue coming to market in volume and at a fair price, growers will need plants resistant to diseases appearing in the bogs,'' Haley said.

After review of testimony received at the hearing, USDA will decide whether to conduct a referendum to determine support for the amendments. The Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937, which authorizes the order, sets two conditions for the proposed amendments to become effective. One is that two-thirds of growers voting in the referendum, or the votes of those representing two-thirds of the berries grown by producers voting in the referendum, would have to approve the amendments. The other is that processors of at least half of the cranberries processed by those processors voting in the referendum approve the amendments. The act authorizes processors to vote in referenda in certain marketing orders where most of the commodity grown is used for processing.

Like 45 other marketing orders for fruits and vegetables, the cranberry order is monitored by AMS. The order covers all cranberries grown commercially in the United States.

Details of the proposal will appear in the Jan. 4 Federal Register. Copies are obtainable from USDA, AMS, Fruit and Vegetable Division, Marketing Order Administration Branch, Rm. 2522-S; telephone (202) 447-3920.

Clarence Steinberg (202) 447-6179

#

PRIVATE EXPORTERS REPORT SALES ACTIVITY FOR USSR, UNKNOWN, CHINA, AND PAKISTAN

WASHINGTON, Jan. 3—Private exporters today reported to the U.S. Department of Agriculture the following activity:

—Export sales of 150,000 metric tons of soybeans for delivery to the USSR during the 1989-90 marketing year and under the seventh year of the Long Term Grain Supply Agreement signed Aug. 25, 1983 and extended Nov. 28, 1988;

—Export sales of 150,000 tons of soybeans for delivery to unknown destinations during 1989-90;

—Export sales of 100,000 tons of corn for delivery to China during 1989-90; and

—Export sales of 26,000 tons of soybean oil for delivery to Pakistan during 1989-90.

The marketing year for soybeans and corn began Sept. 1 and for soybean oil began Oct. 1.

Sales of wheat and corn to the USSR for delivery during the seventh year of the agreement (which began Oct. 1, 1989 and ends Sept. 30, 1990) total 11,809,400 tons, of which wheat is 800,000 tons and corn is 11,009,400 tons. Sales of soybeans total 217,900 tons and soybean meal total 795,000 tons. In addition, sales of barley total 7,300 tons.

USDA issues both daily and weekly export sales reports to the public. Exporters are required to report to USDA export sales of 100,000 metric tons or more of one commodity, (20,000 metric tons or more for soybean oil), made in one day, to one destination by 3:00 PM eastern time on the

next business day following the sale. Export sales of less than these quantities must be reported to USDA on a weekly basis.

Thomas B. McDonald (202) 447-3273

#

THIS WEEK'S HONEY-LOAN REPAYMENT LEVELS UNCHANGED

WASHINGTON, Jan. 4—Producers may repay their 1988 and 1989 honey price-support loans at the following levels, according to Keith D. Bjerke, executive vice president of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Commodity Credit Corporation:

Weekly Honey-loan Repayment Levels, color and class, cents per pound

	1989-crop	1988-crop
Table		
White	40.0	40.0
Extra-light Amber	37.0	37.0
Light Amber	36.0	36.0
Amber	35.0	34.0
Nontable	33.0	33.0

The levels are unchanged from those announced April 20, 1989.

Producers who redeem their honey pledged as loan collateral by repaying their 1988 or 1989 honey-price support loans at these levels may not repledge the same honey as collateral for another loan.

Contacts: Jane K. Phillips (202) 447-7601 8:00 am-4:30 pm EST

John C. Ryan (202) 447-8207 4:30 pm-5:30 pm EST

#

"GOOD GUY" BACTERIA MAY COME TO THE RESCUE IN SALMONELLA WAR

WASHINGTON, Jan. 4—A "hit man" of sorts is being sought by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to kill Salmonella and other food pathogens.

This hit man is bacteria that eat Salmonella and other harmful and food-spoiling bacteria. USDA's Agricultural Research Service scientists have begun studying ways to use rod-shaped bacteria known as Bdellovibrio in food processing and packaging. These "good" bacteria—B. bacteriovorus, B. starrii and B. stolpii—are harmless to humans.

"This is the first time anyone has tried to use a predatory bacterium for ensuring food safety," said Richard Whiting, a research food technologist with the ARS Microbial Food Safety Research Unit, Eastern Regional Research Center, in Philadelphia. "These bacteria are pretty energetic and we'll be seeing how effective they are at controlling Salmonella and other food-borne disease-causing bacteria."

It will take at least a year to grow the bacteria and test their performance as a natural control mechanism, Whiting said.

Studies will determine if the parasitic bacteria can be commercially adapted as a spray to stop Salmonella and other bacterial growth in meats, eggs and powdered milk during processing, he said. The bacteria also might be added to packaged meats sold at the grocery store. If Salmonella start growing either at the store or in a consumer's refrigerator, Bdellovibrio would eat the harmful bacteria, Whiting said.

The three parasitic bacteria, which were discovered by other scientists in the 1960s, are common in soil and water. All three bacteria are parasites of only Gram-negative bacteria, one of two broad classes of bacteria that includes Salmonella.

A person can ingest the bacteria during a simple swim in a river, lake or ocean, Whiting said. Moist areas are prime locations of the bacteria, he added.

The cell walls of these parasitic organisms contain certain complex molecules. These molecules are keys that unlock the door to the cell wall of Gram-negative bacteria such as Salmonella. Viewed under a microscope, Whiting said, a Bdellovibrio organism squeezes between Salmonella's cell wall and cell membrane and begins feeding. Salmonella then dies rapidly—in about a half-hour.

Whiting also is studying Bdellovibrio's action against other Gramnegative bacteria, such as a disease-causing strain of Escherichia coli. He said previous studies looked only at nonpathogenic strains of E. coli.

"We're interested in how broad the Bdellovibrio's appetites are," he said.

Adding bacteria to food is not a new concept, Whiting said. Bacteria are currently used to make yogurt, pepperoni, pickles and many other foods. ARS scientists also have found bacteria that preserve fruit by competing with fungi that cause decay.

The risk of Salmonella growth can be reduced by proper refrigeration and making sure meat is thoroughly cooked. Even if Bdellovibrio proves successful at killing Salmonella and other harmful bacteria in food, Whiting said safe cooking and storage practices should be "strictly followed" as a way to prevent contamination.

"I would look at this (use of Bdellovibrio) as a form of insurance," Whiting said.

The USDA estimates that illnesses caused by Salmonella and other food-borne bacteria have a $1 billion to $10 billion economic impact through lost wages, decreased worker productivity, medical expenses, industry production losses and destruction of products.

Bruce Kinzel (301) 344-2739

#

NOTE TO EDITORS: For details, contact Richard Whiting, research food technologist, Microbial Food Safety Research, Eastern Regional Research Center, Agricultural Research Service, USDA, Philadelphia, Pa. 19118; telephone: (215) 233-6437.